

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A photolithographic process comprising the steps acts of:

[[-]] applying a photoresist layer ~~(2)~~, with a substantially uniform thickness, on a substrate ~~(1)~~,

[[-]] locally exposing the photoresist layer ~~(2)~~ to a radiation source with a suitable wavelength,

[[-]] providing a suitable liquid developer composition on the substrate ~~(1)~~,

[[-]] dissolving an exposed or unexposed region of the photoresist layer ~~(2)~~ with the developer composition, and

[[-]] rinsing and drying the photoresist layer ~~(2)~~ thereby interrupting said dissolving step act,

wherein the substrate ~~(1)~~ has a metallic surface ~~(1c)~~ in

contact with the photoresist layer ~~(2)~~ and the photoresist layer ~~(2)~~ has a thickness $d_r < 100\text{nm}$ to improve photoresist wall steepness, and

wherein the metallic surface comprises Ni or Au.

2. (Currently Amended) A The photolithographic process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the substrate comprises a metallic surface layer ~~(1b)~~, with a thickness d_m larger than approximately 10nm, and a further substrate material ~~(1a)~~.

Claim 3 (Canceled)

4. (Currently Amended) A The photolithographic process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the photoresist ~~(2)~~ is a positive novolac resin-based photoresist.

5. (Currently Amended) A The photolithographic process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the substrate ~~(1a, 1b)~~ is a master substrate for the production of a high density optical medium.

6. (Currently Amended) A stamper ~~(3)~~ for the production of optical data storage media, manufactured by using the master substrate as used in claim 5.

7. (Currently Amended) Use of a stamper ~~(3)~~ as claimed in claim 6 for the manufacture of a high density optical data storage medium.

8. (Currently Amended) An optical data storage medium produced in an injection molding process by using the stamper ~~(3)~~ of claim 6.

9. (New) The photolithographic process of claim 1, wherein the photoresist wall steepness is at least 70 degrees.

10. (New) The photolithographic process of claim 1, wherein the photoresist wall steepness is at least 65 degrees.